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LB 657

not enough. But let's assume they are. It's still a very serious situation. And these things go until finally something breaks. Perhaps someone is injured. Whose fault is it? It's nobody's fault. It's an accident, will of God. No, it's not. It's our responsibility to take care of the assets entrusted to us. Do you put repairs on your car before they're needed or after it breaks down in the middle of the night out on a lonely road? I do it as soon as you know what the problem is. We've known about these problems for years and years. What are we going to do about it? This is not a cure-all, but my amendment, which takes the 2 cents out of the tax placed on each pack of tobacco, and instead of flowing to the General Fund, flows to 309. It's an allocation of money already being taxed. It's not an increase in tax. I think that's an important point. This is something that I think would garner any necessary additional support LB 657 would have to have. Don't misunderstand me. I still don't like LB 657. And I don't think it's the duty of the state to take care of things like this for the city of Omaha and the city of Lincoln. But political reality is something else. I would like you to think about this and I would like you to vote for the amendment. It takes nothing away from LB 657. It reallocates already taxed money to something that I feel is of extreme importance. And if we do this and keep our attention on this which is our responsibility and pay attention to it all the time, which is what you have to do on maintenance, then we can move on to some of these other things--life/fire safety, aid to disabled Americans, energy conservation which in theory would pay for itself. This is a beneficial use of money. This is a good vehicle for it. And God knows that the need is there. I urge your support for this amendment. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Tyson. Debate on the Tyson amendment to LB 657. Senator Beutler, followed by Senators Wickersham, Janssen, Vrtiska, Thompson, Engel and Wehrbein. Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Lt. Governor Maurstad, members of the Legislature, this amendment is not supported by those in favor of LB 657. First of all, let me remind you that this amendment is similar to, if not exactly the same as, amendment that was rejected by the body on General File. Secondly, the objective